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THE ECLIPSE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

by William Henry Chamberlin

"Individuals die. Nations only die when they surrender . . ." Yugoslav General Simich.

"In the present crisis where the entire world is threatened by the Communist menace, the United Nations has proved that it is not only an utterly ineffective weapon to check military aggression but that it is actually a trap for those nations which rely upon it as an organization to secure action against aggressors. . ." Senator Robert A. Taft, in his Senate speech of January 5.

What General Simich said about nations is equally true as regards organizations. The League of Nations became a symbol of futility because of its failure to organize effective resistance to the Japanese acquisition of Manchuria and the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. Munich has become a byword of reproach for acquiescence in aggression.

But by comparison with the whimpering pleas with which the United Nations sought to contend with Chinese Communist aggression the League action on Manchuria and Ethiopia was a model of daring. And the men of Munich, by the same yardstick, behaved like heroes.

Chamberlin and Daladier yielded to an implied threat of force. But the United Nations fairly wallowed in humiliation, asking for one cease fire after another from an aggressor who was seeking avowedly to annihilate an army that was fighting under the UN flag, and getting nothing but contemptuous rejections in return.

As a result of the collapse of UN intestinal fortitude in the face of Mao Tse-tung's truculent challenge the United States has been placed in a position at once tragic, ridiculous and humiliating. American troops are in Korea as the principal contingent in an army which is supposedly carrying out a UN mandate to resist aggression. When General MacArthur crossed the 38th Parallel and sought to create conditions for the establishment of a united free Korean government he was acting by virtue of an overwhelming majority (47 states) of the UN membership.

But for many weeks after the Chinese Communist invasion of Korea and attack on the UN Army the United Nations refused to make the smallest moral gesture on behalf of the men who were fighting and dying, supposedly on its behalf. The word "aggression" was not even whispered in the corridors at Lake Success.

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It is a matter of serious doubt whether the prestige that was lost during those weeks of inaction can ever be regained. It will certainly require action, and strong action, not the passing of paper resolutions, to redeem this record. And an aroused American people will probably pass a verdict of swift repudiation on any American statesman who sends Americans to die under the banner of the UN or who refers to that organization as the cornerstone of our foreign policy.

II

The United Nations was supposed to implement a theory dear to the hearts of international zealots on both sides of the Atlantic. This was the theory of collective security, in accordance with which peace was indivisible. Should an aggressor commit a breach of the peace anywhere, the peace-loving nations, acting under the authority of the League of Nations, or the United Nations, were supposed to function as a sheriff's posse and to bring the offender to justice.

This theory received a trial run in the case of Korea. It did not work. As a result collective security is bankrupt and the United Nations is morally dead.

Only Communists and fellow-travellers would be likely to deny that the invasion of South Korea on June 25 was a flagrant example of unprovoked aggression. Strategically there was not a good case for the commitment of American ground forces in this rugged peninsula, under the shadow of hostile hordes of Chinese manpower and supporting Soviet potential air and naval strength.

America certainly had no material reason for intervening in Korea. However, it was decided to make Korea a test case for resisting armed aggression. As a result of the Soviet boycott of the Security Council, it was possible to obtain a unanimous ruling of that body, authorizing collective action for this purpose. Only the Soviet Union and its satellites voted against this action in the Assembly.

However, from the beginning there were grave rifts and fissions in this experiment in enforcing collective security. The nations which voted in favor of resisting North Korean aggression possessed populations running into many hundreds of millions. Had they wished, they could have put into the field an international army capable not only of crushing the North Korean invaders, but of making Red Chinese, or even Soviet intervention an extremely hazardous enterprise.

But very few members of the United Nations showed any disposition to fight as they voted. Some ninety per cent of the foreign ground forces committed in Korea were American.

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The bubble of collective security was finally pricked when the Chinese Communist troops which had been infiltrating into Korea in increasing numbers started a large scale attack on General MacArthur's army. A more clear-cut case of aggression, calling for the application of the collective security theory, could hardly be imagined.

Scrupulously following instructions from Washington which were influenced by UN fears of "provoking" Chinese intervention, General MacArthur had been most careful to abstain from hostile moves against Manchuria. He had denied himself the advantage of the aerial reconnaisance in Manchuria which might well have averted the defeat by revealing the numbers and strategic dispositions of the Chinese troops.

Whereas it might be argued that what happened in Korea was a civil war between North and South Koreans, the Chinese invasion of Korea was an act of clear imperialism. Moreover a UN Army, carrying out a mission which had been sanctioned by a large majority of the UN members, was subjected to an attack, avowedly designed to drive the UN forces into the sea and make impossible the realization of any of the objectives for which the UN intervention had been undertaken.

Faced with this unmistakable challenge, a challenge made brutally clear in the truculent speech before the United Nations by the Chinese Communist representative, Wu Hsiu-chuan, the United Nations put on an almost incredible exhibition of shortsighted timidity. It issued one plaintive plea after another for a cease fire, raising its price, its reward of aggression, all the time.

The climax was reached when the United States accepted and supported a five-point cease-fire offer which Senator Taft rightly described as "the most complete appeasement since Munich". This proposal called for withdrawal of all non-Korean armed forces by appropriate stages. Then the Korean people were to choose their own government in accordance with United Nations principles.

These suggestions overlooked the very important point that large numbers of North Korean troops are operating south of the 38th Parallel, and that these numbers could be multiplied many times by the very simple device of putting North Korean uniforms on the fraternal Chinese Communist "volunteers".

Heart of the appeasement was in the fifth point, which provided that as soon as agreement was reached on a cease fire the UN Assembly should set up a committee, composed of representatives of the United

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States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and Communist China, "to try to achieve settlement of Far Eastern problems, specifically Formosa and admission of Peiping to the United Nations".

IV

As the Chinese Nationalist representative commented, this was a case of asking the Chinese Communists: "How do you like Formosa, rare, medium or well done"? In a keen analysis, suggestive in logic and morals of some of the protests which the last representative of a free Polish government, Mr. Jan Ciechanowski, addressed to the State Department against the policies which reached their culmination at Yalta, Dr. T. F. Tsiang, the representative of the Chinese Nationalist Government, characterized the proposals as "the total sellout of the United Nations, Korea and China".

This sellout was temporarily averted only because the Chinese Communists, prompted from Moscow, showed determination to make the UN drink the last dregs of the bitter cup of humiliation. The Peiping regime refused to accept the cease fire as a prerequisite of negotiations. It insisted on "negotiating" not only at the point of the pistol, but while still shooting the pistol. Yet even afer the rejection of this offer the mood for peace at any price remained strong in the UN.

Certain clear lessons, however unpalatable to theorists of internationalism, must be drawn from this spectacle of UN division and impotence. There must be no more United Nations wars. It is simply intolerable that Americans should do most of the fighting and dying while the UN does the appeasing and surrendering. It is equally intolerable that we should fight a half-hearted war, militarily and politically, out of fear of offending the susceptibilities of the weakest and most timorous of the members of the United Nations.

For the vague, fuzzy commitments of the UN Charter we should substitute, where national interest and security require, hard-and-fast military alliances, based on the principle of equality of risk and sacrifice. Aid to foreign nations should be strictly in proportion to their proved value as allies. A good example would be plenty of aid to Turkey, no aid at all to India. If our men must fight, let it be under the banner "America First", not under the standard of the United Nations, which has already been lowered in ignominious surrender.

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Not Merely Gossip A Supplement to Human Events Vol. VIII, No. 5

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By Frank C. Hanighen January 31, 1951

SECRET WEAPON: We have received from an authoritative source an answer to the present burning question: why have the American forces in Korea been able not only to make a stand in South Korea, but also to drive the Reds northward? Speculation on this mystery has ranged from the usual remarks on the embarrassing length of the enemy's lines of communications, to the political thesis that "maybe it's intentional withdrawal", perhaps because Stalin wants to keep us entangled in a costly war in an unimportant sector. But the source above-mentioned is convinced that one factor has played a major role -- chemical warfare, the employment of which in Korea has received little publicity.

Specifically, the weapon used is "jellied liquid fire", a preparation which ignites on contact and is dropped from our planes on units of the enemy's forces in the field. Our source claims that as a result of "liquid-fire bombing", the Red troops have been "dying like flies". From Air Force circles, we hear some confirmation of this report, with the additional information that not only the dropping of jellied fire, but also tactical bombing and strafing of enemy units have caused extraordinarily heavy enemy casualties. It should be said that jellied liquid fire is not a brand-new weapon. It was used with devastating effect in World War II.

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REECE: Senator Taft is not a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and so he will not be present when Eisenhower reports to Congressional committees, unless he asks for and receives special permission to attend. (As presently planned, the General will be heard by a joint meeting of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, and the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees.) However, if questions are permitted at this meeting, there will be one member of Congress present who may authentically prove to be the questioning voice of the Senator from Ohio. That man is Representative Carroll Reece of Tennessee, who has long been known as a great admirer, close friend and ardent supporter of Taft.

It is a little-noticed fact that Reece has been named as a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. It is reported that, in hearings last week, Reece sharply interrogated Secretary Dean Acheson when he appeared before that body. The nature of his questions stood in decided contrast to the mild probings of the rest of this Administration-dominated Committee. Whatever happens at the Eisenhower hearings, this Congressman may be counted on to advance an independent and critical viewpoint in this key group during the rest of this session.

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"FREEZE" AND "SQUEEZE": The "freeze" in prices and wages is scarcely a "freeze" of either one. More exactly, there is persuasive evidence that the order is an adroit move to undo and divorce the joint control of prices and wages that was written into the statute by Congress last summer. It goes far in attaining that end. Wages are not "frozen"; only a dike is built, with great holes at vital points, and the way is cleared under the formula of keeping pace with the cost-of-living index, for another round of inflationary wage boosts.

The first lifting of the lid is in giving the green light to all of the pay increases that have been negotiated since last June, but are not yet in effect. This includes the 20 cents an hour increase gained by John L. Lewis for his miners. In the offing is permission by Price Administrator DiSalle to the coal operators to raise their prices to cover the Lewis pay boost.

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Cracks begin to appear in the ceiling of the price "freeze" as soon as it is imposed. Prices are "frozen" at their highest point in American history, although most food commodities are not included. All of the mark-ups and bid-ups since last June are covered. The unfortunate dealers who have sought to hold down prices are caught fast at their top levels of the last month, while those who have raised prices to the limit are given the benefit of the artificial stimulation.

How far the "freeze" goes in meeting the immediate problem of inflation is difficult to say, but no one seems to think it goes very far. It has many aspects of being hasty improvisation to meet criticism that has been mounting in Congress, and the growing pressures of consumers whose incomes are fixed and unchanging.

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SALES TAXES: Tax-conscious members of Congress have toyed with the idea of a Federal sales tax, examined its money-raising possibilities, and are turning away from it. The problems involved in raising any worthwhile sum in revenue are found to be many. A very heavy tax would bring in a lot of money that is sorely needed, but the irritations and resentments that would be aroused among consumers, and among businessmen, are deemed to be of much greater consequence. Hence the burst of talk this week that Congress will probably turn again to increases in the levies on personal incomes, corporate earnings and excises.

According to some calculations, a retail tax of 10 to 12 per cent would be required to raise the $16 billion in added revenue which the Treasury is seeking. A tax of this size, it is asserted, would put such a crimp into business operations as to reduce the volume of taxes from corporate earnings, and also reduce the intake from excises. Therefore, it might result in a net loss to the Treasury. Sentiment in the House indicates that a sales tax could be successfully imposed only if virtually all necessities of life were exempted. This would include food, medicines, fuel, drugs, clothing, gasoline, oil and rentals, as well as many forms of services. These exemptions would reduce the hoped-for revenue by at least one-half.

A high sales tax, it is said, would price a lot of things out of the market, and serve to set up "black markets" in such things as used cars and other second-hand products. But the most powerful argument of all is that it would arouse the resentment of housewives, with almost certain repercussions in next year's election.

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SOCIALIST SETBACK: Indications that British Socialism has suffered losses appear in the press from time to time. Some months ago, Professor John Jewkes (author of Ordeal by Planning), described in the London Time and Tide the disarray among the theorists of Marxism, their contradictions not only among each other but also within the writings of individual economists themselves. The practical (and dismal) experiences with various socialist experiments and some back-tracking by the heads of the Socialist government have accentuated this disarray. When the intelligentsia are shaken, then sooner or later the effect will become evident in the policies of the politicians. Perhaps the most important segment of the intellectuals is in the university world. Therefore, the following report to the Baltimore Sun (January 21, 1951) by Lord Winster offers some light on this situation. (Winster is special correspondent in London for the Sun.)

"Anomalously", remarks that correspondent, "Britain is a Democracy in which public opinion forms from up down and not from down up. It follows that what goes on amongst university undergraduates is of particular importance for assessing the future. A report from Oxford says that before World War II 'it was both fashionable and intellectual for undergraduates to be Socialist. These undergraduates played a major part in creating a mental climate without which the Socialists could never have gained office'. These enthusiasms have waned.

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"'This intellectual force now has been spent. The enthusiasts found to their dismay that the masses desired not Utopia but a larger share in the benefits of bourgeois life,' the report adds. 'Never before have Conservative associations been so strong. Never before have Conservative motions received such handsome majorities in unions and debating societies all over the country. This trend is most marked in Oxford and Cambridge, formerly strongholds of academic socialism.'"

Lord Winster goes on, "This change in the fashion supports Georges Clemenceau's saying, 'Not to be a Socialist at 20 is proof of want of heart; to be one at 30 is proof of want of head.' It is also in line with the journal Economist's assertion that the Socialist party's stock has been slumping and will continue to do so."

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STOLBERG: The sudden death of Benjamin Stolberg last week is indeed a severe loss. A list of his books appearing in the obituary notices in the papers bears testimony to his erudition and knowledge of politics, especially in the labor field. Recent pieces in the American Mercury -- one on Taft, another on Lattimore -- showed his talents undimmed. But it is not so much the loss of his pen, brilliant as it was. Ben was a Bohemian -- somewhat like that artist in Balzac's Cousin Bette; many of his masterpieces were talked, not written. It was in that very role that his influence -- the influence of the cenacle -- was exerted. As George Sokolsky well pointed out the other day in his column, Ben's great background knowledge, the pyrotechnics of his conversation and the shrewd alertness of his mind proved of inestimable inspiration not only to other writers and thinkers, but also to many figures in the arena of politics.

His death came with special cruelty, for the word had gone round that Ben was making a come back. It may be recalled that he had been so bold, in the Thirties, as to expose the Communist ramifications in the American labor movement. To use a journalist's expression, the story was "broken too soon". It was not too soon for the good of the country, but at that time the Communist infiltration and influence had risen to a new high; and "liberals", in and out of editorial offices, found the Stolberg frankness too strong a medicine. Within ten years, of course, Phil Murray and his aides were sweating profusely in an effort to purge the Reds whom Stolberg had uncovered a decade before.

As a result of this cowardice, Ben was blacklisted and his hitherto familiar by-line disappeared from national magazines. His is but one case of the general boycott imposed on writers of independence. There were others: John T. Flynn, William Henry Chamberlin, Eugene Lyons -- to mention a few. They were punished for being "right too soon". But the events of the past year began to have effect; a few editorial doors closed to Ben were beginning to open. When we saw him a fortnight ago, he was filled with plans for articles, books, a column, etc. Then suddenly it was all over.

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AS PARIS GOT IT: A friend sends us a French translation of President Truman's famous letter to the music critic, as it appeared in Le Monde, December 11, 1950. "On croit entendre un veillard refoulé, qui n'a jamais eu un succès de sa vie, un homme a huit ulcères de l'estomac, faisant un metier fait pour ceux qui n'en ont que quatre. Si jamais je vous rencontre, vous aurez besoin d'un nouveau nez, de vous mettre au régime des biftecks et peut-être de porter une ceinture abdominale."

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CORRECTION: We wish to state that the figure quoted for mileage charges on private railway cars, as given in our item "Government and Railroads" (Not Merely Gossip, December 27, 1950) is in error. Instead of $17 a mile, as published, we find that charges (while not uniform and a matter of some statistical confusion) are somewhat less than $1 a mile.

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Book Events

Psychoanalysis and Religion by Eric Fromm. New Haven: Yale University Press. $2.50.
Reviewed by Frank Chodorov.

If the psychological sum-total of the human being is protoplasmic, conforming readily to any and all environmental influences, as the "adjustment" psychoanalysts hold, then the religious concept of the soul is pure myth (as maintained by many followers of Freud). In fact, these practitioners explain all religious experiences as emotional phenomena traceable to conditioning, and insist that if we could get to these environmental pressures and expose them to view, the religious impulse would vanish. Some psychoanalysts trace religious experiences to sex impulses.

This materialistic approach to religion is pleasing to the collectivist. It is a basic tenet of all collectivistic thought that the individual is indefinitely pliable; he has no inflexible character, no indelible instincts, no psychic characteristics that will not bend to the influences brought to bear upon him.

On the other hand, this idea is repulsive to the Judeo-Christian tradition of a responsible personality and a conscience that expresses itself in religious worship. The rift between religion and psychoanalysis was therefore basic and unbridgeable.

A long step toward compromise was taken by Eric Fromm in his Man For Himself. In what amounted to psychoanalytical heresy, he conceded that the human psyche was possessed of a fixed quality, something he terms "temperament", which no amount of conditioning would make into something else. Furthermore, he contended, the emphasis put on therapeutic adjustment is not only wrong, but could be actually harmful. If all human experience is nothing but adjustment to environment, we would never have emerged from the caves; and if the individual who finds himself out of tune with his environment is driven to an acceptance of it, the mental disturbance from which he suffers is not always cured but can be driven inward.

Having admitted the imponderable of a "temperament", this eminent psychoanalyst was well on his way to his latest book, Psychoanalysis and Religion. Whether or not his concepts of "soul" and "conscience" correspond with religious usage, the mere employment of such terms is evidence of a distinct turn in psychoanalytical thinking. It is a recognition, at any rate, that religious experiences have a fundamental base and cannot be dismissed as emotional reactions to outside influences.

It is through ritual that this "need" finds expression. It is man's way of satisfying his craving for an ideal, an object of devotion. In primitive rituals, God is the symbol of power over man; in the humanistic rituals, He is the symbol of man's own power, "which he tries to realize in his own life". But, whether it is the pagan urge for submission or the Christian urge for self-realization, the originating impulse is to be found in the composition of man, not in his surroundings.

Operating concurrently in the individual are these two religious drives, the primitive and the humanistic. His feeling of insecurity impels him to follow the herd, to seek the approbation of his fellow man. He yearns "to belong" and to follow. He identifies his "object of devotion" with his group, and thus we have a psychological inclination to the worship of the State and to an acceptance of the führer principle. On the other hand, his capacity to reason gives evidence of his separateness from the group; he knows that though he is part of the herd he is still something apart. It is this consciousness of individuality that raises his "object of devotion" above and beyond the herd. He worships God because he has a need for self-identification.

Thus, bondage and freedom, primitivism and humanism, are concurrent in the human makeup. The job of the psychoanalyst is to free the individual from his sense of subservience to the herd, rather than to accentuate it, so that he can the better develop his potentialities. This is another way of saying that he can never really approximate the "image of God".

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